

Certified Operator

Training, education, and experience requirements

The State of Kansas, through the Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), administers a mandatory water and wastewater operator certification program. The program was begun in 1975 as a result of laws passed by the Kansas Legislature. The law requires all water supply systems and wastewater treatment facilities to be under the supervision of an operator certified by KDHE. The Legislature realized that proper operation of these facilities was essential to protect the health and environment of Kansans.

- **How the program is administered** - the program is administered through KDHE and provides for five certification levels for water operators, and five certification levels for wastewater operators. There is currently no mandatory certification program for distribution system, collection system, or laboratory personnel.

In order to achieve certification, an individual must attain competency through study, training, and on-the-job experience. Once a minimum amount of experience has been gained, the individual must pass a written examination. Upon passing the written examination, KDHE issues a certificate to the operator. The certificate must be renewed every two years. Prior to renewal, operators must attain continuing education in some aspect of their certification area.

- **How reciprocity is handled** - KDHE is a member of the Association of Boards of Certification (ABC) and maintains reciprocity with the ABC water and wastewater examinations. In almost all cases, we reciprocate on certificates issued by states whose examinations are also reciprocal with ABC. In other words, if you have a certificate from an ABC-certified state, you can probably obtain a Kansas certificate. For states not reciprocating with ABC, reciprocity is awarded on a case-by-case basis.

Requirements

What you have to do to become certified

Prior to taking an operator certification examination, an operator must meet four requirements:

1. Currently own or be employed by a water supply system or wastewater treatment facility.
2. Have a high school diploma or GED.
3. Have acquired the minimum number of years of experience for the class of examination desired (*see the table below*).
4. Have acquired the minimum number of *points* for the class of examination desired. Points are awarded based on experience, education, and training (*see the table below*).

<i>Class</i>	<i>Points*</i>	<i>Years of Experience</i>
<i>Small System</i>	<i>12.5</i>	<i>6 months</i>
<i>I</i>	<i>13.0</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>II</i>	<i>14.0</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>III</i>	<i>16.0</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>IV</i>	<i>18.0</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>* See the back page for a listing of point values</i>		

Once the minimum requirements are met, the operator must submit an examination application form, and a \$25 examination fee to KDHE. We can be contacted at 785.296.5511 for information on the dates and locations of examinations.

If you wish to obtain a certificate through reciprocity, you must submit a completed *Request for Reciprocity* form. A copy of the form may be obtained by contacting us at the telephone number listed above. It is particularly important that you submit a copy of your certificate from the state where you are currently certified.

If reciprocity is awarded by KDHE, there is a \$35 fee.

Training

How you obtain the necessary training in Kansas

Training is a vital part of the Kansas certification program. Training is helpful in obtaining initial certification, and it is mandatory for renewal of a certificate. Ten hours of training are required during every two-year renewal period for Class I - IV water and wastewater certificates. Five hours of training are required every two years for Small Systems certificates. *See the last page for a listing of training credit hours awarded for various training activities.*

Kansas is fortunate to have numerous quality training opportunities available. Training in Kansas is typically provided through the following outlets:

- C The Kansas Environmental Training System (KETS). KETS is a not-for-profit corporation providing environmental training and technical assistance to both public and private entities. KETS comprises representatives from Dodge City Community College, Fort Scott Community College, Salina Area Technical School, Kansas Section of the American Water Works Association, and the Kansas Water Environment Association and Midwest Assistance Program. KDHE serves in an advisory capacity to KETS. Copies of KETS training schedules can be obtained from KDHE or at KDHE's website www.kdhe.state.ks.us/water/tech.html
- C The Kansas Rural Water Association (KRWA). KRWA provides numerous water and wastewater training opportunities for cities, rural water districts and others. The training is held throughout the year at various locations. For more information, contact KRWA at 785.336.3760.
- C The KDHE annual Operators School. The School is held each year around the first week of August in Lawrence, Kansas.
- C In-house training, vendor training, and private training. Training falling in this category must be pre-approved by KDHE. Credit hours are assigned solely by KDHE.

Training/Experience Credit

Training/Education Experience	Credit Hours*	Experience Points
1-day training**	6	0.00
2-day training**	10	0.25
KDHE Annual School <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 days• 3 days	10 15	0.25 0.50
High School diploma or General Education Development diploma (GED)	NA	12.00
College education- each yr <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 30 semester hours	NA	1.00
Operating experience - each yr <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must be involved in daily operation and/or maintenance activities• Must be full time - full time means on the job during the working day for the plant or system.	NA	1.00
Cal. State Univ. Courses <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Per volume	NA	1.00
Approved semester-long courses (KETS)	54	1.50
Approved 2-yr environment technology degree	NA	6.00
Approved Training <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 40 contact hours	40	1.00

* *Hours do not carry forward to subsequent renewal period*

** *Training must be pre-approved by KDHE*

Operator Certification



Education, Training and Experience Requirements

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